

# Ole Hanson Stumps the Country for Americanism

## Seattle's Fighting Ex-Mayor Really Understands the Northwest, and He Says What He Thinks About the Reds

By Louis Lee Arms  
I. W. W. eruptions on Armistice Day and the events of the past fortnight have once more singled out the Northwest as the hot spot of radicalism.

The shooting down of four ex-soldiers and members of the American Legion on November 11 at Centralia, Wash., followed by the lynching of one "Red" and the jailing of a score more, have created a situation the end of which is not yet.

No man understands the Northwest, the character of its people and its political and economic structure better than Ole Hanson, Seattle's fighting ex-Mayor, the spectacular white-haired American of Swedish extraction whose perception and decision last winter broke a sympathetic strike which since has been characterized as, in effect, a social revolution.

Mr. Hanson is now on a speaking tour of the country. During the past seven weeks he has spent forty-two nights in sleeping car berths. He is preaching Americanism and relating to his audiences his experiences with the radicals of the Northwest—those same that were implicated in the Armistice Day outbreaks.

"Make it a felony to belong to the I. W. W. or a kindred organization," said Seattle's former mayor to The Tribune representative. "No amount of theorizing suffices in the present hour. Act! Jail the native trouble-makers and deport the rascally aliens who are equally at the bottom of the unrest of the Northwest."

### Behind the Discontent

Seattle's erstwhile Mayor, who resigned his position to take the platform against radicalism, summed up the reasons for the chronic discontent in the Northwest as follows, beginning at the inception of the organization out of which grew the Industrial Workers of the World:

"It could always be found in the Northwest that radicalism began among those men who had no fixed responsibilities. Lumber and mining workers were the ones invariably affected.

"These men were virtually homeless and womanless, and that is a condition that makes for discontent. Revolution feeds upon discontent, and there has been plenty of both in the Northwest. The lumber worker averages about eleven days to a job. He is paid well for this work and with the first or second pay day he frequently disappears, going to the city to spend his earnings and then back to work at another camp when he is broke.

"To understand our situation it is necessary to understand the character of the men who want to overthrow the government and the conditions under which they are working and have worked.

"As early as 1914 men who were opposed to our system of government were convinced that the unrest among this large field of workmen could be capitalized. An army is held together by a common purpose, so is the priesthood and other groups of men, but these unmarried, homeless workers had no stabilizing influences and clutched at anything that promised an easier life and excitement. The last is important.

"Debs, Symons, Haggerty and Coates whipped the miners into line first in 1914 under the head of the Western Federation of Miners. It was out of this organization that both the I. W. W. and the Nonpartisan League grew. They grew rapidly, for they guaranteed radical reforms and pandered to the love of excitement and intrigue which the homeless and womanless man will inevitably substitute when there is no domestic life.

"At this time the radical leaders decried unionism. The unions were the quiescent tools of the capitalist,

they said. Nothing ever could be done through them that the I. W. W. could not accomplish more effectively and in less time. The I. W. W. felt sorry for the unions, but, which is more important, could not show them the error of their ways.

### A Matter of Evolution

"From 1914 to the big strike of 1917 we may assume that conditions in the lumber woods were not of the best. All industrial improvement is a matter of evolution, but, as yet, the living conditions in the great woods had not evolved. The men did hard work and lived in shacks and bunkhouses. They furnished their own bedding with which they trudged from camp to camp. For many years there were no amusements for the men, and this, with the lack of home life and the general feeling of irresponsibility, made of these workers saturnine, rough fellows who, in the rough-and-tumble fights of the camps, sunk the spikes of their shoes deep into the faces of their opponents. There is no gainsaying that the employers were slow to recognize conditions, or it may be that they thought the quality of creature comforts was comparable to the loyalty of their men.

"After the great strike of 1917 was called living conditions for the lumbermen were improved. Better beds, better food and better hours were established. Now I would rather have a meal in a Washington lumber camp than the best dinner that could be served in a New York hotel. Camp cooks are paid \$175 to \$200 a month and they are acquainted with the appetites to which they minister.

"The advent of better living conditions did not diminish the popularity of the I. W. W. Rather it helped, for the results of the strike were pointed to as the magic that could be weaved by organization and many converts were gained. So far, so good; for these, broadly, are accepted principles of employer-employee relations and are a thing apart from revolution.

"That takes in again the character of the men. Seattle, as the first port of entry from Russia, and the Northwest in general as the jumping off place for those who drift across the continent from the Atlantic continued to attract the homeless wanderer. Under the prevailing conditions it was here that the 'floater' changed from a nobody to a somebody, for in the eyes of the 'Red' radicals who ruled the I. W. W. the floater was potentially a soldier of the revolution and as such was a valuable asset.

### Mobilizing the Floaters

"Better living conditions meant no more than temporary gain to these men. That was not their vital object and never has been. The proposition was to mobilize these floaters or itinerant workmen in sufficient numbers to guarantee the success of one bold stroke that would overthrow organized government and start a revolution which would sweep the continent.

"These men, as I wish again to emphasize, were homeless and

womanless. I have seen hundreds of Russian men in Seattle, but never a woman I have recognized as Russian. From 1900 to 1918 seventy of every one hundred immigrants past nineteen years to reach this country have been males. That tells much of the story in the Northwest, for the woman, after all, rules the home, controls the expenditures and keeps man in his place and satisfied. The most practical employer is he who builds homes for his employees, for that employer rears on the

## Oleisms

**T**HE yesterdays are gone forever, but the lessons taught by the past must be remembered if we are to progress.

*In order to understand the present we must remember the lessons of the past, but must forget its prejudices.*

*This is a new day—a new world—but one must never forget that old human nature never changes.*

*Our present condition has been bred by indifference, neglect, ignorance and selfishness.*

*Cowardly complacency must be wiped out by intense interest in our country's problems.*

*Despair never caught a fish nor built a home.*

*Great wealth, to be respectable, must come from great service.*

*Poverty oft comes to men who have naught that the world wants to buy.*

*There is, as yet, no synthetic substitute for brains.*

—OLE HANSON, November 18, 1919.

solid rock of psychological and sociological fact.

"The improved condition that came in 1917 brought no real content. It stayed the hand of the I. W. W. for the moment, but the goal of revolution loomed ahead. The I. W. W. still held aloof from the unions, but after the overthrow of the Russian government a new policy was conceived. Previously the I. W. W. had desired to destroy all unions to create one big union. Now, as a matter of practical politics, it was decided that the I. W. W. would go into the labor unions, and, operating wheels within wheels, use the 110 crafts in Seattle as a tool to gain its ends.

"The story of the soviet was preached in every labor hall in Seattle. Its benefits and the advantage of making one bold stroke for so-called liberty were urged by the 'Red' leaders. In the strike at Seattle last February we never have been able to get the exact ballot on more than one of the union meetings. That one showed that a union with a membership of six hundred decided to go out in secret meeting in the vote of sixty men. How these sixty men managed to manipulate the six hundred is none of our affair. They did do it. And these sixty men, as might be expected, were the I. W. W. radicals who had gone into the unions that they might work from within, just as they are attempting to do to-day. We may assume that a similar operation took

place among all the unions that voted on the so-called sympathetic strike for the shipyard workers, which was, in effect, revolution thinly disguised and bristling with potentialities.

### Unnatural Living

"The conditions which I have outlined are as surely responsible for the outbreaks on Armistice Day as they were for the attempted revolution last winter in Seattle. It finds its basis in the unnatural state of living which prevails in the Northwest plus the false hopes held out by the radical leaders taking their cue from Russia. Ignorance is at the bottom of the situation, but while such ignorance obtains it is important that public consciousness be awakened to the danger and that it be properly combated.

"In the outbreaks at Centralia and elsewhere the tag has been definitely placed on the I. W. W., just where it belongs, and any excuses that their acts were governed by the motive of self-defense will be taken for what they are worth.

"As a remedy for a situation superinduced by an unnatural state of living and which has reached such an acute stage as is evidenced in the Northwest, there is but one cure, and that is force. If the public wants to fight I. W. W.-ism let us make it a felony to belong to it, or to a kindred organization. Make reading, writing and speaking of the English language compulsory for

workers, whether union or nonunion. It unalterably opposes the "closed shop" which shuts the doors of industry against the American workman who is not a member of a labor organization.

It is un-American to interfere with the personal rights and constitutional liberties of the individual. Therefore, we shall oppose the use of force or intimidation by any one endeavoring to persuade workmen either to join, or to resign from a labor organization.

We hold that both the employe and the employer are privileged to terminate their relations whenever either chooses to do so, unless, of course, there be contracts between them.

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